Medicine Hat
The Gas City

MEDIA RELEASE

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City of Medicine Hat - 580 First Street S.E. - Medicine Hat, Alberta, T1A 8E8 - (403) 502-8071

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 29, 2007

SMOKING BYLAW TAKES EFFECT MAY 31

Medicine Hat – The City of Medicine Hat's new Smoking Bylaw goes into effect Thursday in conjunction with World No-Tobacco Day.

On Jan. 8, 2007 City Council approved Smoking Bylaw 3762.

"The City of Medicine Hat is committed to building healthier communities by promoting health, safety and welfare of its residents," says Mayor Garth Vallely. "The smoking bylaw will limit public exposure to second hand smoke and will create a healthier workplace for all workers. The City will provide all the tools and information necessary to ensure the public is aware of and understands the bylaw."

The Smoking Bylaw stipulates that no person shall smoke:

- inside a building;
- within three (3) metres of an entrance or exit to a building or within three (3) metres of a ventilation system air intake for a building;
- on a balcony of a building;
- in an outdoor area of a restaurant or drinking establishment such as a patio, where consumption of food or beverages is allowed; or
- inside a public vehicle (school bus, taxi, City-owned vehicle, transit bus, or other vehicle that transports people for a fee or as a complimentary service)

The provisions of the bylaw do not apply to private living accommodations or hotel rooms which are considered private living accommodations.

No proprietor of a place where smoking is prohibited by this bylaw shall permit smoking or ashtrays in their establishment.

Proprietors of bingos, casinos, drinking establishments or restaurants must ensure that No Smoking signs are posted at each entrance to their businesses. Electronic No Smoking signs can be downloaded from the Bylaw Enforcement website.

Starting May 31, a person who contravenes any provision of the bylaw is guilty of an offence and punishable on summary conviction to pay a fine of not less than $250 and not more than $10,000, or in default of payment to a period of imprisonment of not more than one year. If the violation ticket so provides, a person may make a voluntary payment of $200 in lieu of a court appearance.

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"The City of Medicine Hat has been addressing concerns of both residents and business owners affected by the terms of the bylaw," adds Vallely. "The City provided information to the media, ran radio and newspaper advertisements, and held public information sessions to inform the public about the bylaw."

In order to prepare for enforcement of the bylaw the City Bylaw Officers, Customer Service representatives, and other employees who dealing with the public have been provided with information to ensure the public is made aware of the bylaw's provisions.

The City of Medicine Hat reminds residents and business owners that there is no grace period – enforcement will begin May 31.

For more information on the Smoking Bylaw, including compliance and enforcement, refer to the Smoke Free Bylaw brochure, frequently asked questions, or contact Bylaw Enforcement 529-8400.

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For further information, please contact:

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